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ABSTRACT

One significant technique for initiating needed cooperation in tech prep is through use of the DACUM (Developing a Curriculum) job analysis process. Many program directors are asking educators to identify expert workers to serve on the panel. The next phase of serious linkage and partnering occurs when the panel comes together to interact and describe their jobs precisely. The process usually results in identification of 8 to 12 duties and 75 to 125 task statements that outline what a successful worker in a particular job or job cluster must be able to do. The DACUM process is quick and inexpensive and has public relations value. DACUM has seven procedural steps: committee orientation, review of occupation, identification of duties, identification of specific tasks performed, review and refinement of task and duty statements, sequencing of task and duty statements, and identification of related requirements. Verified tasks undergo a task analysis to determine specific steps, performance standards, tools, knowledge required, safety, attitudes, and decisions involved in performing each task. Information resulting from task analysis is then incorporated into modules, learning guides, and other instructional materials. The DACUM process enables educators to develop and revise curricula, involve business and industry, and develop accurate job requirement profiles; in their turn, business and industry can develop accurate descriptions of jobs and participate in development of educational programs. (YLB)

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DACUM AND TECH PREP: DYNAMIC DUO

by
Robert E. Norton

TECH PREP is designed to prepare a workforce for America which is second to none. The 1990 Perkins II Act proposes to accomplish this goal by supporting educational programs that will develop in students the "competencies" needed to work in a technologically advanced society. It further specifies that TECH PREP programs must be developed by consortia of secondary and postsecondary institutions. In developing regulations for TECH PREP, the U.S. Department of Education has specified that programs be developed in consultation with business, industry, and labor.

Most educators are, and all should, take the challenge to reform education with TECH PREP seriously. The Oregon State Board of Education, for example, has called for 50/50 partnerships between:

- Academic and Vocational-Technical Educators
- Secondary and Postsecondary Educators
- Employers and Educators

But how do we get secondary and postsecondary educators to work in a fully collaborative manner? And even more challenging in many cases, how can we get business and industry to cooperate with vocational-technical educators?

One significant technique for initiating the needed cooperation is through appropriate use of the DACUM job analysis process. DACUM has been effectively used for many years by community colleges and business-industry trainers to analyze all types of jobs quickly and efficiently and at a relatively low cost. Tasks or competencies identified during the analysis become the basis for curriculum development and training efforts which follow.

DACUM now is being rediscovered by many TECH PREP program managers as a process that can spark and even ignite the fires of cooperation. It can be used to rigorously and quickly identify the real-world competencies that workers need to be successful in a technologically advanced society. In implementing TECH PREP and using the DACUM process for job analysis, many program directors are asking postsecondary and secondary educators each to identify half of the 5 to 12 expert workers to serve on the panel. There is no need to describe the many benefits that educators can derive from these contacts and cooperative efforts alone.

The next phase of serious linkage and partnering takes place when the panel of 5 to 12 top performers (expert workers) from as many different businesses come together for two days to interact and precisely describe their jobs in great detail. The workers in a regular DACUM are not hampered or constrained by a literature base or any instructor-created document. Instead, the DACUM panel starts with a blank wall and, with the help of a trained process facilitator, proceeds to identify in a comprehensive and precise manner every duty and task they must perform to be successful. The synergism and consensus that result when the top performers interact with each other is impossible to describe. The workers' involvement is substantive and substantial, and can spark the kind of partnerships needed.

Previous participants frequently report "partner" companies offering to loan or donate equipment, provide subject-matter experts, host tours, offer coop or apprenticeship opportunities, and assist in many other appropriate ways. Many a significant and meaningful partnership has begun with a DACUM workshop. Properly nurtured, most have continued with the result of many benefits accruing to each partner.

If you are moving ahead with TECH PREP planning and implementation, you owe it to your students to give DACUM a try. More details about DACUM: a proven and powerful research approach to occupational analysis follows.

DACUM (**D**eveloping **A** **C**urricu**um**), is an approach to job/occupational analysis. DACUM has proven to be a very effective method of quickly determining, at relatively low cost, *what* tasks must be performed by persons employed in a given job or occupational area.

The profile chart that results from the DACUM analysis is a detailed and graphic portrayal of the duties and tasks involved in the occupation or job being studied. An example of a DACUM chart is attached. The DACUM analysis can be used as a basis for:

- Curriculum development
- Curriculum review and revision
- Training needs assessments
- Competency test development
- Worker performance evaluations
- Student recruitment
- Student counseling
- Student achievement records
- Training program review
- Curriculum articulation
- Tech prep program development
- Job modifications
- Job descriptions

DACUM has been successfully used to analyze occupations at the managerial, supervisory, technical, skilled, and semi-skilled levels. DACUM operates on the following three premises:

- *Expert workers* are better able to describe or define their job than anyone else.

- Any job can be effectively and sufficiently described in terms of the *tasks* that *successful* workers in that occupation perform.

- All tasks have direct implications for the *knowledge* and *attitudes* that workers must have in order to perform the tasks correctly.

A carefully chosen group of 5-12 expert workers from the occupational area under consideration form the DACUM committee. Committee members are recruited directly from business, industry, or the professions. The committee works under the guidance of a trained facilitator for two days to develop the DACUM chart. Modified small-group brainstorming techniques are used to obtain the collective expertise and consensus of the committee.

Because of their current occupational expertise, committee participants do not need any advance preparation. Almost without exception, participants on DACUM committees have found the activity to be a professionally stimulating and rewarding experience. The DACUM committee is carefully guided by the facilitator through each of the following steps:

1. Orient committee to DACUM process.
2. Review job or occupational area of concern.
3. Identify the duties (general areas of responsibility).
4. Identify the specific tasks performed in each duty area.
5. Review and refine task and duty statements.
6. Sequence task and duty statements.
7. Identify the following: (a) general knowledge and skills required, (b) the tools, equipment, supplies and materials used, (c) the worker traits and attitudes involved, and, (d) future occupational trends/concerns.
8. Other options, as desired.

The DACUM process usually results in the identification of 8-12 duties and 75-125 task statements that outline *what* a successful worker in a particular job or cluster of related jobs must be able to do. These tasks are then commonly submitted to a larger but still select group of workers and/or the immediate supervisors of such workers for verification purposes.

The tasks that are verified as **important** and **difficult to learn to perform** become the research base for developing learning guides, modules, or other units of instruction for the educational or training program. During the instructional development phase that follows the DACUM workshop, the verified tasks undergo a task analysis to determine the specific steps, performance standards, tools (equipment, materials and supplies), knowledge required, safety, attitudes, and decisions involved in performing each task.

The information resulting from the task analysis is then incorporated into modules, learning guides, or other types of instructional materials for student and teacher use.

Why DACUM?

The main reason for using DACUM has been the desire of many industrial trainers and educators to establish a relevant, up-to-date, and localized curriculum base for instructional programs. Clearly, a curriculum base that is soundly determined with maximum input from the businesses and industries that are going to employ the students prepared by secondary and postsecondary institutions is needed. To permit any school, community college or other educational agency to identify a localized research base for curriculum development, an alternative to the traditional, time-consuming, and more costly approach to occupational (job) analysis was needed. DACUM is such an alternative.

DACUM is an occupational analysis procedure that has experienced remarkable success in a relatively short period of time in the United States, Canada, the Netherlands, New Zealand, and several other countries. Because its structure and procedures allow occupational duty and task statements to be identified effectively, quickly, and at a very low cost, DACUM has become closely associated with the movement toward competency-based eduction (CBE). In addition, the DACUM process has a number of characteristics and qualities that are greatly needed in CBE if it is to become a practical alternative to traditional vocational education.

First, it is a quick process; one that can be completed in only two days once committee members have been identified. Second, DACUM is certainly inexpensive when compared to the cost of traditional occupational analyses ($1,00-$2,000 will cover the cost of most DACUM workshops). Finally, the end product of a DACUM analysis, a complete competency profile of an occupation, can be very favorably compared in validity with any other method. Given its present popularity and effectiveness, DACUM may soon become the dominant approach to occupational analysis for vocational and technical education and for business-industry training.

One additional benefit of DACUM is its public relations value to the educational institution or other agency doing the DACUM. Once employers understand the purpose and the process of DACUM, they are generally shocked to realize that a secondary or postsecondary institution really wants industry to help them identify the competencies needed by workers in their field. So many employers are familiar with the "rubber stamp" role that they are so often asked to perform on ad hoc committees (and sometimes even on occupational advisory committees) that it often takes them a while to understand that an educational institution is really serious about wanting industry to help determine *what task*s students must be able to perform in order to be valuable future employees.

Once employers understand what is to be done via DACUM and how the results will be used, it is a rare employer who will refuse to cooperate. Instead, many schools and colleges who have used DACUM report such reactions as the following:

- Offers of equipment and supplies
- Offers of resource persons to help teach in emerging technology areas
- Requests for inservice training programs to meet local industry needs
- Increased enrollments in adult upgrading programs
- Increased support of the educational institution in a variety of ways by local business, industry, labor, and management

Although the public relations value of DACUM is secondary to its main purpose, its significant, long-term impact is too important to overlook or lightly dismiss.

When Should DACUM be Used?

Although the DACUM process has been used for several purposes, it is ideally suited for researching (1) the competencies that should be addressed in the development of new training and educational programs, (2) the competencies that should be delivered by existing training and educational programs, and (3) the relevance of existing DACUM charts.

Development of New Educational Programs

Once the need for a *new* instructional program has been established, DACUM can be used to quickly identify *what* tasks a successful worker must be able to perform on the job. Such use of the DACUM process will ensure that the new program will be relevant if the tasks (competencies) identified in the process are used as the basis for subsequent program planning and instructional development.

Review of Existing Educational Programs

A committee can be convened to identify the competencies that should be delivered in an *existing* instructional program, just as it can be convened to identify the competencies for a new a program. In this case, once the competencies have been carefully identified by industry experts, the existing educational program and instructional materials are examined to see if they address all the required tasks. Modification of the educational program are then made, where necessary, to ensure current relevance of the program.

Update of Existing DACUM charts

The third major use of the DACUM process is to review an existing occupational profile to determine if it still presents an accurate picture of the tasks performed by workers in that occupation. This type of updating may be conducted when the occupational profile is to be used for preparing job descriptions, conducting worker performance evaluations, making training needs assessments, or other non-curricular purposes. Depending on the occupational area and the amount of technological change occurring within it, it is usually necessary to conduct an update workshop session on the average of *once every 3 years*. Even then, an active advisory committee will probably need to make additional changes in between the workshops in order to maintain a curriculum that is responsive to today's business, industry, and public service needs.

Special Applications

DACUM has also been successfully used in what could be called "special applications" of the basic process. For example, in cases where qualified workers could not be released for a two-day workshop, modified DACUMs in which literature reviews were used to identify all relevant duties and tasks have been conducted with reasonable success. In these cases, one day has generally been adequate for the committee to review and accept, modify, or reject each duty and task statement derived from the literature.

DACUM has also been used successfully by the Center on Education and Training for Employment to identify the competencies required of workers when they are engaged in a

specific portion of their total job. for example, vocational teachers who have been successful in implementing competency-based education have been able to identify the additional competencies needed by traditional teachers who want to convert to the CBE approach.

A similar approach has also been used to identify the additional competencies needed by vocational teachers who need to assist students in improving their basic skills and who are responsible for serving students having special exceptional needs.

Recently the Center was asked by AT&T if we could analyze a job that doesn't exist. Believe it or not the process worked amazingly well and the company was so please that we were asked to conduct another DACUM workshop for them within a month.

Another successful adaptation of DACUM has been its use in identifying the tasks that vocational educators (specifically, teachers, counselors, and administrators) should perform in order to implement sex-fair vocational education programs.

DACUM Quality

Although the DACUM process lends itself to a number of regular and special adaptations, two critical factors are always necessary to obtain a high quality DACUM chart. The *first* is to assemble a committee of 5-12 experts in the area under study, and the *second* is to use a *trained DACUM facilitator*. Without both of these, the resulting analysis is questionable, at best.

Because of the widespread concern about DACUM being conducted in a high-quality manner that ensures valid results, a "DACUM on DACUM" was conducted at the National Center for Research in Vocational Education[1] in October, 1982 to identify the tasks required of the DACUM coordinator and facilitator. The resulting DACUM coordinator's and facilitators profile was the research base for developing the *DACUM handbook*. The handbook and the DACUM coordinator's and facilitator's profile are available from the Publications Unit of the Center on Education and Training for Employment.

A number of DACUM conventions or standards have also been established by experienced facilitators as "rules of thumb" that should always be adhered to if the process used is to be labelled a DACUM occupational analysis. The conventions are as follows:

- The facilitator is qualified through training and practical experience.
- Committee members are expert workers and/or immediate supervisors of such workers in about a 5:1 ratio.
- Committee members participate during the entire workshop.
- Task statements abide by all of the criteria for acceptable task statements.
- The same task statement appears only once.

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[1]Currently known as the Center on Education and Training for Employment, The Ohio State University, 1900 Kenny Road, Columbus, OH 43210-1090

- There are 8-12 duty areas for most occupations.
- There are six or more task statements in each duty area.
- There are 75 to 125 task statements for most jobs.

What Are the DACUM Procedural Steps?

The DACUM committee is carefully guided through each of seven procedural steps. These steps are described in the following paragraphs.

Step 1: Orientation of Committee

The goal of this step is to provide an introduction of the DACUM process and to explain to the participants the importance of their role in it. During this introduction, emphasis is placed on the rationale for employing this technique, which includes the fact that, in a very short period of time, and with low cost, DACUM can be used to identify the tasks (competencies) important to an occupation.

Step 2: Review of Occupation

The purpose of this step is to arrive at a mutually acceptable working job title(s) of the occupation to be analyzed. During this step, the related job titles and specializations to be included in the analysis are clarified. An organizational chart may also be developed to help clarify the location of the workers within their organization and their relationship to other workers.

Step 3: Identify Duties (General Areas of Responsibility)

Using the output of a general brainstorming session about the occupation as a springboard, the third step in the process involves determining the general areas of responsibility or duties of the occupation. The resulting statements reflect functional areas of responsibility under which all the specific tasks will fit. Most occupations are subdivided into from 8-12 duty areas.

Step 4: Identify Specific Tasks Performed

The fourth step involves taking each duty area and specifying the six or more tasks that are performed by workers fulfilling duties in that area. This step takes the most time, as commonly 75-125 tasks may be involved, depending on the complexity of the occupation. Each task statement begins with an action verb, includes an object which receives the action, and usually one or more qualifying words.

Step 5: Review and Refine Task and Duty Statements

After specific tasks have been identified for all areas of competence, each task and duty statement is individually reviewed. This process usually results in several changes that improves the clarity and precision of the statements.

Step 6: Sequence Task and Duty Statements

After the refinement of task statements from each area of competence, the committee organizes the tasks and duties into some logical instructional or other sequence.

Step 7: Identify Related Requirements

Either along the way or once the analysis of the occupation is competed, the committee is asked to identify the general knowledge and skills; worker behaviors (traits and attitudes) tools, equipment, supplies and materials; and future trends and concerns unique to the occupation.

Why Verify the Occupational Analysis?

After a DACUM workshop, the institution has an occupational analysis listing all of the tasks workers perform in that occupation. It was obtained from 5-12 expert workers and/or supervisors. However, the tentative task list most likely should be subjected to further verification by a larger number of experts.

"Verifying" the tasks is a process that confirms that the tasks listed are, in fact, *all* of the tasks that students will need to perform when they enter the occupation. The tasks should be submitted to people currently active in the occupation for their critical examination, and they should be asked to consider each item and determine whether that item is, or is not, actually a part of the occupation. They may also suggest additional tasks that appear to have been omitted.

In addition, other types of data, such as the *importance of the task* and *difficulty of learning to perform* the task, may be obtained readily through the verification process. Each institution has to consider the costs and benefits of verification and decide which approach will better serve its needs and desires.

The degree of sophistication and type of verification process used can vary widely. A fairly comprehensive verification study may be needed for new curricula for which little information is available.

The DACUM coordinator is usually the person who conducts the verification survey. Other persons, however, who possess the necessary data collection and analysis skills also may conduct the verification. In all likelihood, three other parties will need to be involved: (1) an administrator who can give the necessary approvals, (2) the curriculum specialists and instructors, and (3) advisory committee members. As with the identification of DACUM committee members, the latter two groups often are able to assist with the identification and selection of verifiers.

When preparing a survey or task inventory instrument, the number of questions asked must be kept to a minimum in order to ensure a better rate of response. Only information that is relevant to the institution as it proceeds to organize and develop a responsive curriculum based on the DACUM analysis should be gathered.

Verifiers should consist of a group of expert workers in the occupation and/or the immediate supervisors of workers how have direct responsibility for getting the work done. The DACUM committee should also be part of the verification group. An approach sometimes used to collect the data needed is to convene a special verification committee, solely for the purpose of reviewing the task statements. Probably the most efficient and most frequently used data collection procedure is the mailed questionnaire.

When the data have been collected and summarized, they are interpreted to determine what changes are needed in the initial task listing. These judgments should be made, probably with the help of the original DACUM committee.

Once the tasks for an occupational program are verified, an institution has a solid research base on which to build an effective vocational training program.

There is no single best way to institutionalize the use of DACUM charts. Most institutions use teams to revise their existing curricula or to develop new curricula based on the DACUM findings.

One of the major tasks undertaken next by most institutions is to conduct a *task analysis* that is, to analyze each verified task in order to identify:

1. the steps/activities involved,
2. the related knowledge (math, science, language) required,
3. the attitudes involved,
4. the performance standards expected by industry
5. the tools, equipment, supplies, and materials needed,
6. all safety concerns, and
7. the decisions the worker must make while performing the tasks.

This process, properly conducted, serves several very important purposes, one of which is to provide teachers and others with explicit and detailed information for developing curriculum. It also helps the teachers and curriculum developer(s) determine the instructional time appropriate for teaching each task (competency) and enables them to develop performance standards which are based on business and industrial criteria.

Benefits to Industry and Education

The DACUM process offers many benefits to secondary and postsecondary educators and to business and industry. It enables educators to:

- Develop new curricula for vocational education and Tech Prep
- Revise and update existing programs
- Substantatively involve business and industry in program development
- Reduce the chance of curriculum "what" errors occurring
- Develop accurate job requirement profiles for use by counselors, students, and program managers
- Identify curriculum support needs–tools, equipment, supplies, and materials
- Identify future occupational trends and concerns
- Assess the need for faculty technical upgrading
- Develop job profiles within a larger occupational cluster
- Solicit contributions of equipment, supplies, etc. based on verified need
- Set the stage for information sharing and the development of ongoing collaborative activities
- Publicize via the DACUM chart their collaborative activities with other educational agencies and industry
- Develop student performance standards based on the realistic expectations and requirements of industry
- Provide a solid basis for the integration of academic and vocational instruction

The DACUM process enables industry to:

- Develop accurate descriptions of new and emerging jobs
- Update existing job descriptions
- Evaluate employee performance on verified tasks
- Substantatively involve employees in program development
- Obtain employee commitment through involvement
- Reduce start-up time for program design and development

- Reduce the cost of program development
- Design new training programs cost-effectively
- Participate directly in the development and revision of educational programs
- Assess appropriateness of existing programs
- Develop a fair and defensible basis for test development, staff evaluations, and promotions
- Meet the job specification requirements of the Americans Disabilities Act

Among the many contributions of education to industry, one that seems to be gaining recognition is the DACUM process. The number of industrial clients all across the nation is growing rapidly as word spreads about the efficiency and effectiveness of the DACUM job analysis and curriculum development process.

The list of clients is growing all the time. "Satisfied customers" include American Welding Society, Arthur Anderson, Ashland Chemical, AT&T, Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Florida, Champion International, Control Data Corp., Defense Supply Centers, Eastman Kodak, Emery Worldwide, General Motors, General Electric, Monsanto, Motorola, Inc., Newport News Shipbuilding, Samsung, UAW-Ford, United Airlines, U.S. Government Printing Office, Virginia Power, and many others.

Reactions to DACUM Workshops

With so many positive reactions, a clear picture begins to emerge.

On saving time and money:

> "Doing this process saved many hours of course developers' time and effort. In addition, the duties and tasks were developed among the SME attendees and will build Course Development's confidence that an accurate view of what needs to be developed is now well underway. This process is highly recommended for any future project requiring a job analysis. . . . The competency profile of the CDRP administrator technician is an extremely useful document. Were it not for DACUM, which captured information on duties and tasks, the process would have taken much more time and money."

On strengths of the workshop:

> "The professionalism of the facilitators. They were objective, and truly facilitated the group's work. The DACUM developer who worked with our group was the most expert facilitator I've ever seen!"
>
> "The synergy of the group. None of us could have done this alone."
>
> "Interactions between individuals. The top-down view provided a different perspective."

"All types of people together discussing use-processes. It has rarely been done before."

"Making everyone take a different (user) view of the system as a whole."

On strengths of the process:

"Solid foundation for development; efficient–two days versus six weeks; specific versus general job specifications; employee involvement and buy-in; use of expert panel members; identification of critical tasks; opportunities for sharing ideas."

"A productive way to get information for course developers, a real learning experience for us developers."

"It appears to be a powerful way of getting a large amount of information broken down into duties and tasks in a quick manner."

"It was interesting to see the structure emerge from a chaotic background."

Versatility seems to be one of DACUM's greatest strengths. No matter what the area under consideration, the process seems to yield results and gain enthusiasts. Participants at one DACUM workshop included machinists, who noted they were "able to reach consensus about important trade skills;" travel agents, who found the experience "most impressive;" police officers, who discovered an "excellent way to inform potential recruits of police duties;" paramedics, who thought it was "important to involve persons actually working in the field;" and recreation and parks workers, who thought the approach was "extremely practical."

Summary

DACUM, including the job analysis workshop, task verification, and task analysis process, has worked exceptionally well for many vocational-technical educators, curriculum developers, business and industry trainers, and others. Persons implementing Tech Prep programs are finding DACUM to be a process they can rely on to bring about effective and substantive linkages with industry and provide a solid research base for curriculum development and/or revision. Why not put it to work in your organization or institution?

"Complicating Diversity: An Ethnographic Perspective."
CCCC, San Diego, California, April 1993
Jane Greer and Susan Kates

While the pairing of honors and basic writing students in a single classroom was an attempt to deal with social, cultural, and academic diversity and to make traditional academic roles less confining, Suellynn and Beverly, as teachers of the class in the Fall of 1991, recognized the paradox of creating a paired classroom in order to blur boundaries between students and then announcing to the students that they were in different academic tracks. Consequently, Beverly and Suellynn made a conscious decision to allow the students to discover for themselves that some of their peers were in the honors program while others were labeled as basic writers. Although Suellynn and Beverly were more than willing to discuss the unique nature of the class with the students whenever the students asked about it, few overt discussions of the pairing project, its goals, and its effects on the students' classroom experiences took place over the course of the quarter. However as ethnographic participant-observers, we participated in the students' conversations in the hallways, aligned ourselves with the students' in the classroom, and attended peer tutoring sessions, and we became aware that the often unaddressed but ever present issues of academic hierarchies and social diversity were very much a part of what Robert Brooke has called "the underlife" of the classroom.

In a 1987 article in *CCC*'s, Brooke uses the sociological concept of underlife to explain how students' seemingly subversive classroom behavior is sometimes an effort by students to deal with

the constraints of academic identities which are typically the products of cultural, social, and academic stereotypes. In the H110/110W class which we observed, both the basic writing and the honors students participated in a rich and varied underlife that subversively engaged the explicit goals of the pairing project. We watched as two basic writers launched a battery of paper airplanes as a rebellion against working in a peer responding group with two honor students who were perpetually unprepared. We overheard the basic writing students promising to give each other perfect scores on their oral presentations because they assumed that the honors students would be overly critical. We became aware that three white women from the honors class were enjoying the humor and wit of an African-American man from the basic writing class, but that when they got down to work in their peer responding group, they chose to ignore his comments and contributions. These incidents and others like them from the underlife of the classroom revealed to us that although the issues of academic hierarchy and social diversity were not often addressed in the classroom, they were very much present as these first-year students struggled to negotiate the distance between themselves as individuals and the traditional academic identities which seemed prescribed for them. Today, we would like to offer you portraits of two students, Lisa and Anastasia, whose underlife behaviors can serve as representative examples of the ways in which students may have attempted to deal with the tensions created by the intersection of issues of social diversity and issues of academic hierarchy--tensions which were rarely the subjects of class discussions or writing assignments.

Lisa, an honors student who had enthusiastically pledged a sorority and chose to focus on this new circle of friends for her ethnographic project, presented herself as a stereotypical honors student. On many occasions Lisa demonstrated behavior that might be commonly attributed to honors students: she expressed grave dissatisfaction with any grade she received that was below an A-. She made a point of mentioning her long history of taking honors courses, and she proved to be a leader in her peer responding group by keeping other members of the group on task as well as by facilitating discussions.

However, Lisa's underlife behavior in the classroom illustrates what seemed to be an attempt on her part to deal with the collision of her socialization as a woman and her status as an honors student. The confident honors student persona Lisa tried to project was often contradicted by her self-deprecating comments which seemed to reveal deep-seated insecurities. One day Lisa turned to Susan, who as graduate ethnographer was observing Lisa's group, and whispered: "I'm not a very good writer." Another time Lisa whispered (again so that other group members would not hear) that her peers had chosen more sophisticated projects for their ethnographies than she had and that she really didn't want other people to read the ethnography she had done on her sorority. By choosing Susan as a sounding board, Lisa was able to voice her insecurities while at the same time not endangering her status as an honors student with her peers. When Lisa did make comments directly to her fellow group members which might have undermined her membership in the community of honors students, she did so jokingly. "I'm the queen of run-on's," she said one day as she

handed her paper to another group member to be critiqued. With this light-hearted tone, Lisa was able to acknowledge openly less significant surface-feature problems in her writing while withholding her more serious doubts about her academic abilities.

Lisa's overt posturing as an honors student appeared to be an attempt to make herself believe that she could claim the title of "honors student" as her "true identity," although her conception of what an honors student was seemed to be so monolithic that it could accommodate neither the self-deprecating and insecure aspects of Lisa's personality, nor her research interests about the lives of young women in a sorority. It might have been beneficial for Lisa to explore such issues. Why did she feel her own ethnography came up short when compared to the projects of other students who were studying religious or international student groups? Was it because Lisa's own project was so centered in female experience that she did not feel it was academic enough? Why was Lisa willing to reveal her insecurity to an outsider like Susan, but not to the other women in her peer group? How might Lisa have responded to questions which would have invited her to think about the forces that shaped her view of what it means to be an honors student and to think about how that view might need to be complicated by the fact that 17 of her 20 honors classmates were women who might share both her experiences and her interests? It might have been beneficial fo Lisa to explore these and other issues related to her academic identity and the power dynamics of the classroom in journals, class discussions, or on-line computer conversations. The pairing of classes of honors students and basic writing students was

iniatially undertaken to help students complicate their understanding of academic labels, but without overt discussions or writing assignments about such labels, Lisa was never pushed to move beyond the stereotypical notions that an honors student is a confident, strong writer who pursues "serious" academic issues rather than merely studying a group of young women in a sorority.

While Lisa's underlife behaviors reflected a split between some of the traditionally feminine aspects of her identity and her notions of what it means to be an honors student, Anastasia's actions in the underlife of the classroom seemed to have been prompted by the inadequacy of the label of basic writer. Anastasia was a soft-spoken but friendly young, African-American woman from Cleveland who had hopes of finding a place for herself in the medical profession. Although Anastasia didn't enroll in the class until near the second week of the quarter, she quickly became an integral member of the basic writing class, and she showed herself to be willing to engage in the work of the course. She typically took more time than any of her classmates on in-class writing assignments, and in a self-critique of her first essay which she wrote just before turning it in, Anastasia made the important observation that the strength of her essay was rooted in its description of individual people, but that she needed to do even more fieldwork in order to improve her essay.

Just as Anastasia was a very careful and perceptive reader of her own writing, she was also an excellent reader of the work of other students. In out-of-class peer tutoring sessions with a university writing center tutor and four of her fellow basic writing students, Anastasia frequently offered some of the most

valuable feedback to her peers. When Jake was struggling with the introduction of his final essay, Anastasia asked him, "So what do you really want to get across in your introduction?" After Jake answered that he wanted to explain that he had always been interested in radio stations and that's why he had chosen to study the student-run campus radio station, Anastasia repeated his own words back to him: "So you could say in your introduction that you were always interested in finding out how a real radio station works and that this class gave you a chance to do that?" Jake's response was "Yeah, that's it," and he hurriedly wrote down his own words which he could not get on paper until Anastasia had voiced them for him. Anastasia asked similarly perceptive questions during her classmates' oral presentations. While other students asked short-answer, logistical questions of a student who was presenting her study of a high school English class, Anastasia asked her fellow student why she had chosen to study a high school English class, and this question opened up a much more complicated discussion of the motivations people might have for interrogating their own educational pasts.

Anastasia was also capable of her using her considerable skills as reader and questioner as she explored the culture of the Office of Women Students' Services for her ethnographic project. In her final essay, Anastasia made powerful observations about the racial and ethnic diversity of the staff members at the Women Students' Services office, and she posited possible connections between this diversity and the fact that she had observed that a high percentage of the students who came into the office seeking help and advice were African-American. Anastasia also catalogued

the ways in which different rituals in the office (the staff started every morning in the office by reading the daily horoscopes out loud over cups of coffee and every staff member was treated to a party on her birthday) helped to create a positive working environment and that this carried over into the ways in which the staff members were able to be friendly and compassionate with the students who sought their services.

While Anastasia was making her way through her first-year writing course with a certain amount of success, when she and one of her fellow basic writing students had to join with two of the honors students for in-class peer responding sessions, she began to create an underlife for herself as way to deal with the dynamics of the group. Although Anastasia was initially a careful and conscientious responder to the work of the honors students, the other group members dismissed her feedback. As a result, Anastasia became increasingly silent, and even when she was occasionally asked for an opinion about a draft, she would only shrug her shoulders and look away. And even though Anastasia typically brought drafts to her meetings with her peer tutor from the writing center, she did not present any of her own work for the consideration of the honors students, always claiming that she hadn't finished the assignment. By the end of the quarter, Anastasia even refused to join the two honors students unless Lynda, the other basic writing student, was part of the group.

One of the consequences of these underlife behaviors was that the honors students continued to believe that the basic writing students were not well-prepared or committed students and that any interaction between the two groups of students was not likely to

be mutually beneficial. For Anastasia, her underlife behaviors may have helped her to cope with the immediate tensions of working with honor students, but without a vehicle for explicitly interrogating the consequences of academic labels such as honors student or basic writer, Anastasia seemed powerless to change the situation. We wonder how Anastasia might have benefited from overt discussions or writing assignments which would have engaged her in an interrogation of why her behavior was so different in her two peer responding groups. What observations might Anastasia have reached if she had been given an explicit forum for connecting her observations about the diversity of the staff of the Office of Women Students' Services and its clientele to her own experiences as member of a very diverse basic writing class in which nearly half the students were not of white, Anglo-Saxon heritage and her confrontation with a very homogeneous honors class composed only of students who were white. Such opportunities to engage in a self-reflective examination might have helped Anastasia go beyond the uninterrogated attitudes she gave voice to during her follow-up interview after the class had ended. When asked about how she felt about working with the honors students, Anastasia could only replied: "Well, it was better working with just us [the 110W students]. I don't know why, but it was just better. I didn't like being with them [the honors students.]"

These stories of Anastasia and Lisa are <u>our</u> stories of their experiences in English H110/110W. Anastasia and Lisa might tell different stories of their experiences, as might their classmates and their teachers. However, as ethnographic participant-observers in this innovative class, we came to realize that

placing the students in a single classroom with moveable walls, asking them to work on the same ethnographic assignments, and grouping them together for peer responding was only a first step in the process of dealing with social, cultural, and academic diversity and making academic roles less confining. Intensive reflection upon the dynamics of class discussions and peer responding could help to engage students in an interrogation of the collisions of power, identity, and diversity that affect their own classroom interactions. If students are to move beyond the naive sorts of underlife behavior exhibited by Lisa and Anastasia and to assume a more informed stance towards the political and social forces which shape their educational experiences, opportunities to question, explore, and write about such forces would seem to be a valuable supplement to the important work already begun by the use of an ethnography-based pedagogy and the pairing of students from different academic tracks.